

In the Claims:

1-4. (Canceled)

5. (Currently Amended) A method of interacting with a poster that presents visible information to a viewer, the method comprising:

using a handheld appliance, receiving machine-readable digital data from the poster, said data being ~~in addition to said visible information~~ manifested in a manner such that its existence is not apparent from visual inspection of the poster; and

by reference to said machine-readable data received from the poster, establishing a link to a remote computer;

wherein the appliance includes an output device, and the method includes presenting information to a user based on data obtained from said remote computer using said output device.

6-10. (Canceled)

11. (Currently Amended) A method of interacting with a poster that presents visible information to a viewer, the method comprising:

using a handheld appliance, receiving machine-readable digital data from the poster, said data being ~~in addition to said visible information~~ manifested in a manner such that its existence is not apparent from visual inspection of the poster; and

by reference to said machine-readable data received from the poster, establishing a link to a remote computer;

wherein the method includes communicating over said link to cause electronic content to be transferred, and said electronic content comprises a song.

12-13. (Canceled).

14. (Currently Amended) A method of interacting with a poster that presents visible information to a viewer, the method comprising:

using a handheld appliance, receiving machine-readable digital data from the poster, said data being ~~in addition to said visible information~~ **manifested in a manner such that its existence is not apparent from visual inspection of the poster**; and

by reference to said machine-readable data received from the poster, establishing a link to a remote computer;

wherein the poster is printed, and the printing includes a plural-bit code steganographically encoded therein.

15-17. (Canceled)

18. (Currently Amended) A method of interacting with a poster that presents visible information to a viewer, the method comprising:

using a handheld appliance, receiving machine-readable digital data from the poster, said data being ~~in addition to said visible information~~ **manifested in a manner such that its existence is not apparent from visual inspection of the poster**; and

by reference to said machine-readable data received from the poster, establishing a link to a remote computer;

wherein the appliance transmits at least some of the machine-readable data to a remote database, and the method further includes:

determining, at said remote database, a URL corresponding to said machine-readable data, and transmitting data identifying said URL to the appliance; and

at said appliance, fetching information from said URL.

19-20. (Canceled)

21. (Currently Amended) A system comprising:
a poster presenting visible information to a viewer; and
a handheld appliance, the appliance including means for obtaining digital data from the poster ~~that is in addition to said visible information~~, **said obtained digital data being manifested in a manner such that its existence is not apparent from visual inspection of the poster**, and acting based thereon.

wherein said digital data comprises first and second data fields, one of said fields serving to identify an internet address, and a second of said fields serving to convey identification data that can be passed to said internet address to elicit a response corresponding to said poster.

22. (Canceled)

23. (Currently Amended) A method of interacting with a poster that presents visible information to a viewer, the method comprising:
through use of a wireless, handheld device, receiving machine-readable digital data from the poster, **said data being manifested in a manner such that its existence is not apparent from visual inspection of the poster**;

by reference to said sensed data and a database, determining an address; and
communicating with said address to trigger downloading of music to a user;
wherein said machine-readable digital data is steganographically encoded in artwork printed on said poster.

24. (Currently Amended) A method comprising:
encoding payload data in a poster that presents visible information to a viewer,
**said payload data being manifested in a manner such that its existence is not
apparent from visual inspection of the poster;**
reading the payload data from the poster using a wireless, handheld device; and
using the data read by the handheld device to provide a commerce opportunity
involving music promoted by said poster.

25. (Currently Amended) ~~The method of claim 24~~ **A method comprising:
encoding payload data in a poster that presents visible information to a
viewer;
reading the payload data from the poster using a wireless, handheld device;
and
using the data read by the handheld device to provide a commerce
opportunity involving music promoted by said poster;**
wherein said payload data is steganographically encoded in artwork printed on
said poster.

26. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 5 wherein the machine-readable
digital data is electromagnetically, and not optically, received from the poster.

27. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 5 wherein said appliance
includes functions of both a palmtop computer and a digital camera, and the method
includes – under control of a user of said appliance – snapping an image of said poster,
from which image the digital data is then decoded.

28. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 5 that includes presenting plural
options from which a user can select a desired follow-up action, said plural options
depending on said digital data.

29. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 28 in which said options include plural of the following actions: linking to a fan web site, downloading audio to said appliance, requesting electronic content to be downloaded to a storage site distinct from said appliance, and ordering physical media on which electronic content is stored.

30. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 11 wherein the machine-readable digital data is electromagnetically, and not optically, received from the poster.

31. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 11 wherein said appliance includes functions of both a palmtop computer and a digital camera, and the method includes – under control of a user of said appliance – snapping an image of said poster, from which image the digital data is then decoded.

32. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 11 that includes presenting plural options from which a user can select a desired follow-up action, said plural options depending on said digital data.

33. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 32 in which said options include plural of the following actions: linking to a fan web site, downloading audio to said appliance, requesting audio to be downloaded to a storage site distinct from said appliance, and ordering physical media on which audio is stored.

34. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 14 wherein said appliance includes functions of both a palmtop computer and a digital camera, and the method includes – under control of a user of said appliance – snapping an image of said poster, from which image the digital data is then decoded.

35. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 14 that includes presenting plural options from which a user can select a desired follow-up action, said plural options depending on said digital data.

36. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 35 in which said options include plural of the following actions: linking to a fan web site, downloading audio to said appliance, requesting electronic content to be downloaded to a storage site distinct from said appliance, and ordering physical media on which electronic content is stored.

37. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 18 wherein the machine-readable digital data is electromagnetically, and not optically, received from the poster.

38. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 18 wherein said appliance includes functions of both a palmtop computer and a digital camera, and the method includes – under control of a user of said appliance – snapping an image of said poster, from which image the digital data is then decoded.

39. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 18 that includes presenting plural options from which a user can select a desired follow-up action, said plural options depending on said digital data.

40. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 39 in which said options include plural of the following actions: linking to a fan web site, downloading audio to said appliance, requesting electronic content to be downloaded to a storage site distinct from said appliance, and ordering physical media on which electronic content is stored.

41. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 23 wherein said appliance includes functions of both a palmtop computer and a digital camera, and the method includes – under control of a user of said appliance – snapping an image of said poster, from which image the digital data is then decoded.

42. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 23 that includes presenting plural options from which a user can select a desired follow-up action, said plural options depending on said digital data.

43. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 42 in which said options include plural of the following actions: linking to a fan web site, downloading audio to said appliance, requesting audio to be downloaded to a storage site distinct from said appliance, and ordering physical media on which audio is stored.

44. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 24 wherein the machine-readable digital data is electromagnetically, and not optically, received from the poster.

45. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 24 wherein said appliance includes functions of both a palmtop computer and a digital camera, and the method includes – under control of a user of said appliance – snapping an image of said poster, from which image the digital data is then decoded.

46. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 24 that includes presenting plural options from which a user can select a desired follow-up action, said plural options depending on said digital data.

47. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 46 in which said options include plural of the following actions: linking to a fan web site, downloading audio to said appliance, requesting audio to be downloaded to a storage site distinct from said appliance, and ordering physical media on which audio is stored.

48. (New) A method of interacting with a printed article, for situations where marking of the article with a barcode may be undesirable for aesthetic purposes, the article being printed with artwork intended for viewing by a viewer, the method comprising the acts:

capturing image data from the article using a handheld appliance, said image data comprising data representing said artwork;

deriving, from the captured data representing the artwork, an identifier corresponding thereto;

by reference to said identifier, accessing corresponding data in a remote computer; and

as a consequence of the foregoing, presenting information corresponding to said printed article on an output device of the handheld appliance;

wherein the present method is suitable for situations where aesthetic considerations make use of bar codes undesirable, because the present identifier is derived from the artwork intended for viewing by a human viewer.

49. (New) The method of claim 48 wherein the artwork comprises a photograph, and the method includes deriving the identifier based, at least in part, on the data representing said photograph.

50. (New) The method of claim 48 wherein the artwork comprises a photograph of a person, and the method includes deriving the identifier based, at least in part, on the data representing said photograph.

51. (New) The method of claim 48 in which the presented information comprises a song.

52. (New) The method of claim 48 wherein the article comprises a promotional poster.

53. (New) The method of claim 52 in which the presented information invites a user of said appliance to enter into a commercial transaction relating to a subject promoted by said poster.

54. (New) The method of claim 48 in which the presented information invites a user of said appliance to enter into a commercial transaction.

55. (New) The method of claim 48 in which the presented information includes plural options from which a user can select a desired follow-up action.

56. (New) The method of claim 55 in which said plural options depend, at least in part, on said derived identifier.

57. (New) The method of claim 56 in which said options include at least one of the following actions: linking to a fan web site, downloading audio to said appliance, requesting electronic content to be downloaded to a storage site distinct from said appliance, and ordering physical media on which electronic content is stored.

58. (New) The method of claim 48 in which the deriving comprises applying an algorithm that takes image pixel values as input, and provides the identifier as output.

59. (New) The method of claim 58 in which the algorithm comprises a steganographic decoding algorithm.

60. (New) The method of claim 48 in which said appliance includes functions of both a palmtop computer and a digital camera, and the method includes – under control of a user of said appliance – snapping an image of said article, from which image the identifier is derived.